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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of our fathers and mothers, Your mighty hand has brought our Nation to this moment in its destiny. Lead our lawmakers to do Your will. Help them to see that You desire them to do justly, to love mercy, and to embrace humility. Remind them that You came to our world to bring deliverance to captives, to help the spiritually blind, and to comfort the bruised. May our Senators produce legislation that reflects Your priorities. As they remember that You are more impressed with their integrity than the eloquence of their debates, inspire them to look to You for strength and wisdom. Guide them by Your light so that their lives reflect Your purposes.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, March 3, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,  
President pro tempore.

Mrs. SHAHEEN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following leader remarks, the Senate will resume consideration of the appropriations bill H.R. 1105. The time until 11:45 will be equally divided and controlled between Senators INOUE and MCCAIN. At 11:45, the Senate will vote in relation to the McCain amendment. The Senate will recess from 12:30 until 2:15 for the weekly caucus luncheons. There is almost no question that additional rollcall votes will be expected throughout the day as we work through amendments on this bill. After we do the McCain amendment, I know Senator WICKER was here yesterday on an issue in which he believes strongly. I think that would be a good one to lay down. Senator COBURN has four amendments. They have not been drafted. We have asked him to make sure they are drafted as soon as possible so we can work our way through those.

Senator THUNE has an amendment he wants to offer. This is on the fairness doctrine. Senator VITTER has an amendment dealing with abortion or matters related thereto. We should get to that.

I have spoken to one of the Republican Senators yesterday and that Senator is wanting to offer an amendment to cut the spending of this appropriations bill to President Bush's budget

levels. We would hope that could be laid down soon. That is an important amendment for the minority and certainly one that deserves debate.

That is a brief overview of some of the amendments I know are there and we should get to as soon as we can.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

### OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I listened to the majority leader. He did have a pretty good summary of the amendments we are aware of at the moment, all of which are significant. It is good that we will have a chance to get a vote on most or all of those.

During his campaign, the President said he would not sign any non emergency spending until the American people had at least 5 days to review it on the White House Web site.

So there is no reason for us to rush through this Omnibus appropriations bill when the White House has already promised it won't sign it without the requisite 5-day review.

Besides, we have known about the Friday deadline for months so any pressure to rush this bill is completely manufactured.

The responsible way forward is not to rush through another giant bill, but for the House to prepare a short-term CR so we have time to study and debate the Omnibus on the floor.

Back in January, Republicans urged the President to move the Omnibus before the stimulus. It is now obvious why.

The Omnibus contains funds for 122 programs that were already funded in the stimulus. It also represents an 8 percent increase over last year's regular appropriations, twice the rate of inflation.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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